

Capital Project Charter

Project Name: Eureka to Arcata Corridor Improvement Project County-Route-PM: HUM-101-PM 79.8/85.8 District-Project EA: 01-366000	Project Phase: 0 Phase PA&ED Prepared By: Kimberly Floyd Date Prepared: August 6, 2001
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Charter Purpose:

The purpose of this charter is to document the agreement between the Project Sponsor, Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG), and the Project Manager to develop a Project Report (PR) and Environmental Document (ED) for operational improvements to Route 101. This will complete the Project Approval/Environmental Document (PA & ED) phase, which is the next step in the project development process.

Background:

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) policy requires the completion of the Project Study Report for all major projects prior to their programming in any programming document such as the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The 1998 Interim STIP Guidelines adopted on January 15, 1998 by the CTC, allows for the sequential programming of project components through the development of a Project Study Report – Project Development Support (PSR-PDS). The more detailed studies and analyses are then completed as part of the PA & ED phase and, upon completion, will provide the detail necessary to program the remaining support components and right-of-way and construction capital with a greater level of confidence and lower risk for future scope or cost increases.

On May 1, 2000 Caltrans and HCAOG approved a PSR-PDS that identified the need for a project on Route 101 from PM 79.8/85.8 to improve safety at intersections, reduce operational conflicts along the corridor, and reduce delay at intersections. The PSR-PDS recommended programming the staff support costs for the PA&ED phase of the project in the 2000 STIP as a Regional Improvement Program (RIP) project. Nine alternatives were considered ranging in cost from \$18 million to \$305 million. In September 2000 a Supplemental PSR-PDS was written at the request of HCAOG. The Supplemental PSR-PDS recommended reducing the range of alternatives to be studied due to the extensive environmental impacts and the likely unavailability of funding to support the large construction and mitigation costs of many of the alternatives.

The PA&ED phase of the project is scheduled to begin in July 2001. Caltrans will also prepare a report on interim projects for the Route 101 corridor between Eureka and Arcata. This report is separate from this project and will be presented to HCAOG at the October 2001 meeting.

Project Purpose:

The purpose of this project is to select a preferred alternative, with the accompanying environmental document, that would improve safety, reduce operational conflicts and reduce delay at the intersections along Route 101 between Eureka and Arcata in Humboldt County. The project supports the District Route Concept Report for Route 101 as well as the Department's Vision of providing "California with the safest, best-managed, seamless transportation system in the world". The project is also consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan adopted by HCAOG.

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Project Phase Objectives:

The objective of this phase will be to evaluate proposed alternatives comparable in scope to include constructing an interchange at Indianola Road, improving right turn acceleration/deceleration lanes, closing all median openings, and widening shoulders. The PR shall identify the preferred project alternative for construction and will include the appropriate environmental document.

Schedule: The PR shall be completed by 01/01/06.

Cost: The PR must be completed within the support resource constraints established by the Supplemental PSR-PDS.

Quality: The PR shall identify a preferred project alternative which will improve safety, reduce operational conflicts, and reduce delay at intersections on Route 101 between Eureka and Arcata. The Environmental Document shall be prepared as required by law under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act, Section 404 of Clean Water Act, Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act, Section 4(f) of USDOT Act (required for any project that has FHWA participation).

Customer Satisfaction: The preferred alternative identified in the PR shall have the support of HCAOG. Efforts will be made to gain unanimous, local support for the preferred project alternative.

Project Description/Scope Statement:

The preferred alternative has not been determined at this time. However, the Supplemental PSR stated the scope for the project is limited in magnitude to the Construction and Right of Way capital costs comparable to the Y-4 alternative described in the PSR. The Y-4 alternative proposed closing all median crossings, constructing an interchange at Indianola Road, increasing shoulder widths, and improving acceleration/deceleration lanes for “right turn only” movements at existing intersections.

Project/Phase Constraints, Assumptions, and Risks:

Constraints:

- Staff Support Cost and PY s through PA&ED: \$2.6 million and 25 PY s
- State and Federal environmental regulation compliance
- Existing development within the project limits
- Scope of the project is limited in magnitude to the Construction and Right of Way capital costs comparable to Alternative Y-4 as described above in the Project Description/Scope Statement.

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Assumptions:

- Environmental document (ED) type would be an Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/S) due to the potential environmental/wetland impacts. If environmental impacts are not found substantial and there is not a significant amount of public controversy, the ED may be a Negative Declaration/Finding of No Significant Impact (ND/FONSI).

Risks:

- New or expanded development within the project corridor.
- Future listed endangered plant or animal species.
- In the event the scope of the project increases with the approval of HCAOG due to direction from the Project Delivery Team (PDT), external agencies, or public pressure, an increase in support costs would be required and the delivery schedule reassessed. This would be necessary since any alternative that may be the potential preferred alternative must be evaluated under the CEQA/NEPA laws.

Phase Deliverables:

PDT Meetings

PDT meetings will be held as needed and will include the Project Sponsor. Minutes will be prepared after each meeting. Target Kickoff PDT Meeting - August 2001

Quarterly Updates to HCAOG

These will include a delivery progress update with reference to the approved project schedule.

Public Meetings

Dates to be determined by PDT. Target Public Meeting - September 2001

Draft Project Report & Environmental Document

The draft PR and ED will be completed for public circulation January 2004. Prior to completion of the draft PR and ED several critical milestones for completion are:

- Caltrans will conduct a Value Analysis and provide the summary report to HCAOG.
- Caltrans will complete the NEPA 404 consultations and obtain written concurrence from 6 Federal agencies.
- Caltrans will obtain the Biological Opinion from the appropriate regulatory agencies.
- Caltrans will obtain concurrence on project effect on archeological and historical resources from the State Office of Historic Preservation.
- Caltrans will conduct all necessary technical studies for CEQA and NEPA approval, including the determination of socio/economic effects of the project.
- Caltrans will prepare a traffic model to analyze the potential impact of any proposed alternative to Route 255 and Old Arcata Road.

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Final Project Report & Environmental Document

The final PR and ED will be completed January 2006. Prior to completion of the final PR and ED the following critical milestones shall occur:

- Confirmation of Preferred Alternative
- Respond to comments received on draft ED
- Final mitigation plan
- FHWA approval

Key Team Members:

The PDT team will be comprised of representatives from HCAOG, Caltrans, City of Eureka, City of Arcata, County of Humboldt, FHWA, CHP, Fish and Game (F&G), Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), California Coastal Commission, and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Coordination and approval from FHWA will be needed at various times during the development of the environmental document. Deborah Harmon, Caltrans Environmental Branch Chief, will be the primary contact with FHWA.

In addition to the PDT a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) may be formed. The CAC will be advisory to the PDT to express community opinion and concerns. The Project Sponsor will serve as the chair of the CAC and would appoint a community individual to act as co-chair. Interests may include neighborhood associations, business groups, environmental groups, advocacy groups and special interests.

Deliverable Management:

Work on the PR will begin in July 2001 and work on the ED will begin in October 2001. The project sponsor, HCAOG, shall be updated on the project progress on a quarterly basis. The Project Sponsor, District Director, Project Manager, and key Functional Managers shall be required to sign the final PR.

Changes to Charter:

As the project progresses, this charter may need to be revised. It will be reviewed and updated as necessary with the approval of HCAOG.

Humboldt County Association of Governments

235 Fourth Street, Suite F, Eureka, California 95501 - (707) 444-8208, FAX (707) 444-8319

September 12, 2001

Cheryl Willis,
Deputy District Director Planning
Caltrans District 01
P.O. Box 3700
Eureka, CA 95502-3700


Dear Cheryl:

The Association of Governments approved the Eureka-Arcata Corridor Capital Charter Agreement for the PA&ED component. As you know the need for this important project has been identified in Regional Transportation Plans and programmed in the 2000 STIP Augmentation Process. Further, the document has been a subject of discussion at various levels, and edited as appropriate to address the interests of concerned citizens, the Association and its member entities.

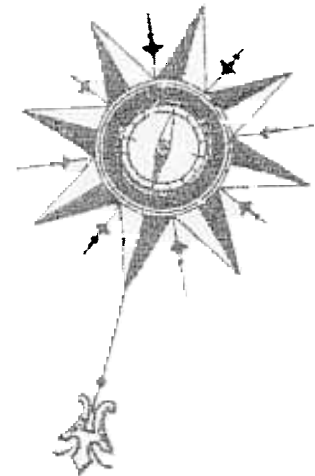
Staff has taken this opportunity to execute two copies of the Agreement which you will find attached for District signatures. It would be greatly appreciated if you and the Project Manager would execute both originals and return one for our records.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Caltrans for their assistance in developing this document and willingness to address the needs of our local citizens and elected officials. We look forward to working closely with the District on the Project Delivery Team to complete this critical component on time. If you have any questions regarding the Board's action, do not hesitate to contact me at 444-8208

Sincerely,


Spencer Clifton
Executive Director

Attachment



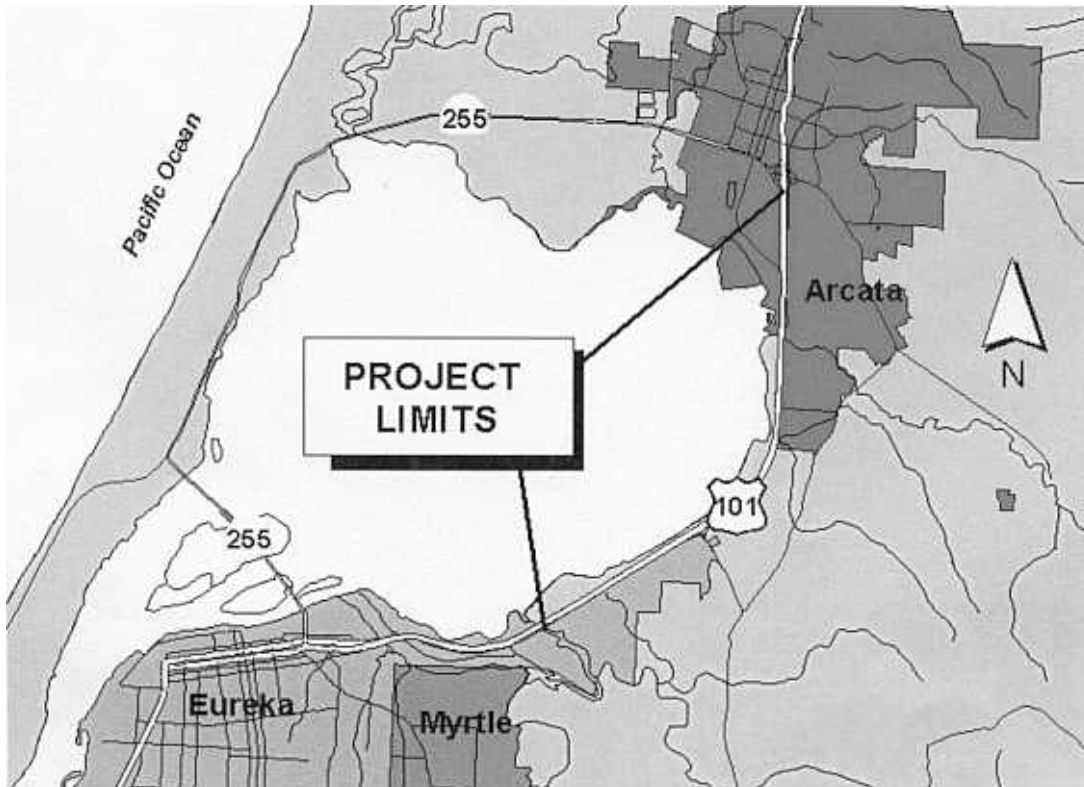
Members: County of Humboldt, Cities of Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell, Trinidad

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Project Location Map:



Approvals:

Project Manager: Kimberly Floyd Date: 9/17/01
KIMBERLY R. FLOYD, PE

Deputy Director Planning Cheryl S. Willis Date: 9/14/01
CHERYL S. WILLIS

Project Sponsor: Spencer Clifton Date: Sept. 6, 2001
SPENCER CLIFTON